

創価大学
国際仏教学高等研究所
年 報

平成20年度
(第12号)

Annual Report
of
The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology
at Soka University
for the Academic Year 2008

創価大学・国際仏教学高等研究所
東京・2009・八王子

The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology
Soka University
Tokyo・2009

More on Gilgit Bronzes and Some Additions to “Die Palola Šāhis”

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Some additions to the material discussed in “Die Palola Šāhis”¹ were published in a previous article in ARIRIAB X 2007². In the meantime, still another bronze was brought to my notice through the kindness of M. Alain Bordier of Geneva, to whom I am also obliged for the permission to publish this piece (plate 1). The halo of the seated Buddha or Bodhisatva is preserved, but the jewel between his eyes is lost. The measurements are unknown to me.

The inscription, which is damaged in parts, reads as follows (plates 2a, 2b, 2c):

deyadharmo ya(m) śākyabhikṣu ratnaprabhaḥ | | (*tadhā*) /right side/ *sār(dha)m*
/back side/ *.inasimghena* | *tadhā gi(khīr)arciṇāyām*

“This is the pious gift of the Śākyabhikṣu Ratnaprabha together with Jinasiṃgha and Gikhīrarciṇā”³

Several individual *akṣaras* are shaped in a very peculiar way, and the reading is consequently not always certain. Instead of *-rmo* rather *-rmā* seems to be written, and the *akṣara kṣu* is identified only because of the context. The last two *akṣaras* on the front side seem to be *tadhā* rather than *tathā*, which is expected according to the usual formula. The same sequence *tadhā* is repeated on the backside. Thus this reading concurs with *tadhā* read very clearly also in the inscription of Susudā⁴.

The right side of the pedestal was evidently damaged during the process of casting as an old repair indicates, which is broken away in course of time leaving a hole in the pedestal. Consequently, no *akṣara* could be placed here, and the continuous writing was

¹ O. v. Hinüber: Die Palola Šāhis. Ihre Steininschriften, Inschriften auf Bronzen, Handschriftenkolophone und Schutzzauber. Antiquities of Northern Pakistan. Reports and Studies, Vol. 5. Mainz 2004 [rev: H. Falk, OLZ 100, 2005, columns 696-698; G. Fussman, JAs 293, 2005, p. 734-742; R. Schmitt, ZDMG 157, 2007, p. 500-502].

² O. v. Hinüber: Three New Bronzes from Gilgit. ARIRIAB X 2007, p. 39-43. Due to a misunderstanding, plate 6 is missing in this article. It is added here at the end as plate 6. I am obliged to the Rubin Museum, New York, for the permission to publish this image, and to Dr. Helmut Neumann, Basel, who kindly brought me in touch with the museum.

³ # indicates the *siddham*-sign, cf. “Die Palola Šāhis” p. 11, note 26.

⁴ The reading *tathā* in inscription no. XXVI line 3, O. v. Hinüber: Die Palola Šāhis, is to be corrected into *tadhā*, cf. plate 34a. — Occasionally, *tha* is written instead of *dha*: O. v. Hinüber: ibidem, p. 34 foll., cf. also Tharmila for Dharmila in an unpublished inscription from Thor (116:3).

interrupted. The result is an empty space between *tadhā* and *sārdham*, followed by another gap also due to damage. This time, however, one or two *akṣaras* are lost at the beginning of the name of the layman *Jinasimghena*, which cannot be retrieved.

Most unusual is the shape of the *akṣara* read here very tentatively as *khī*. Equally dubious is the following *akṣara*, which could be interpreted either as *ra* or as *na*, if *ra* in *ratna*⁵ and *na* in *°simghena* are compared. Unfortunately, the shape of neither *akṣaras* really matches.

As usual, the rules of grammar are not strictly observed⁵, which, however, does not prevent a correct and easy understanding of this very common formula.

Both names, *Jina-simgha* and *Gikhīrarcinā*, seem to belong to those puzzling names not rarely ending in element *°simgha*, which were very tentatively classified as *Burushaski*⁶. Both persons are lay Buddhists, very likely husband and wife, because the second name is clearly feminine, guided by the Śākyabhikṣu Ratnaprabha, who possibly was not only a donor, but at the same time as the *kalyāṇamitra* to the lay people also their spiritual adviser⁷.

A second inscription also recording the donation made by a Śākyabhikṣu was brought to my attention by Dr. Osmund Bopearachchi, Paris, who kindly gave the permission to publish this bronze from a private collection. The measurements are unknown to me (plate 3).

The inscriptions, which runs around the upper part of the pedestal, reads as follows (plates 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d, 4e, 4f):

deyadharmo yaṃ śākyabhikṣu vima(lī)bh(ā)nusya

“This is the pious gift of the Śākyabhikṣu Vimalībhānu”

With the exception of the slightly doubtful reading *vimalī*⁸ the inscription does not pose problems. If read correctly, *Vimalībhānu* instead of *Vimalabhānu* is puzzling. According to the script this bronze is slightly older than the previous one, because *Vimalībhānu* still uses the tripartite *akṣara* *ya*.

These bronzes raise the total number of Śākyabhikṣus in north western Brāhmī inscriptions to six: Śākyabhikṣu Hariṣayaśas (Palola Śāhis, p. 168, inscription no. XXVII), Sarvajñapṛya (ibidem note 225), Acintamitra (Three new bronzes, ARIRIAB X. 2007, p. 40). Moreover, there is one so far unrecognized Śākyabhikṣu found in the inscriptions at Alam Bridge: Śākyabhikṣu Satyaśre(ṣṭhī) (Fussman, p. 43, inscription no. 22.19)⁸. It is, however, doubtful, whether or not the last *akṣara* really is *ṣṭhī* as proposed

⁵ Die Palola Śāhis, p. 145.

⁶ Die Palola Śāhis, p. 146 foll., p. 76, where a reference should be added to H. W. Bailey: Indo-Skythian Studies Being Khotanese Texts VII. Cambridge 1985 [rev.: OLZ 82. 1987, column 508 foll.], p. 61 foll. “Pruśavā”, and ZDMG 157. 2007, p. 390, note 14.

⁷ Die Palola Śāhis, p. 136 -138.

⁸ G. Fussman: Inscriptions de Gilgit. BEFEO 65. 1978, p. 1-64 with planche I-XXXII; for corrections cf. H. Humbach: Hybrid Sanskrit in the Gilgit Brāhmī Inscriptions. StI 5/6. 1980, p. 99-121. H. Humbach, who found the correct reading of the name, also correctly read *śākya* at first, but, strangely enough, rejected *kya* considered as a writing mistake for *ka*, and, consequently, interpreted the inscription as *śāka bhikṣu* “The Śāka monk” (p. 109). The correct reading is now supported by a photo of this inscription taken in 2007 and kindly provided by M. Bemmman, Academy of Sciences Heidelberg, “Felsbilder und

by Humbach. This would be the only *akṣara* in ornamental script in an inscription, which otherwise uses in normal characters. Perhaps it is wiser to follow G. Fussman, but to read -śrī (long -ī, short -i is, as H. Humbach pointed out, impossible). Satyaśrī would be a good Buddhist name, while names ending in °śreṣṭhin do not occur in these inscriptions in contrast to names ending in °śreṣṭha.

The structure of three names could point to a school affiliation of the respective monks. The ending °*prabha* as in Ratnaprabha is preferred by Mūlasarvāstivādins, as is -śrī, perhaps attested in Satyaśrī, while the Mahāsāṃghikas use names ending in °*mitra* as in Acintamitra⁹.

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Moreover, there are some small additions to different details discussed in “Die Palola Śāhis.”

Thanks to a photo kindly provided by H. Falk, Berlin, the complete inscription of the bronze no. XV, “Die Palola Śāhis,” p. 163 with note 220 can be read now (plate 5a, 5b):

deyadharmo yaṃ śrī āddāyās tathā s/right side/ārdham sarvasatvānā(m)

“This is the pious gift of Śrī Āddā together with all beings”

A wording similar to *tathā sārdham sarvasatvānām* occurs also in the inscriptions nos. 38B (*tathā sārdham sarvasatvai sarvaprāṇibhir*) and 39B (*sārdham sarvasatve sarvaprāṇibhir*) in “Die Palola Śāhis,” p. 77, 79 respectively.

An unpublished inscription found at Thalpan¹⁰ seems to provide yet another name of a member of the Palola Śāhi family without any title as in the case of Saṃpūrṇādityanandi¹¹. Inscription Thalpan 524:5 reads:

śrī maṅgalavikramādityanandi.

It is impossible to place Maṅgalavikramādityanandi with any degree of certainty within the family of the Palola Śāhis. If he really is a member in the first place, he could be a son of Jayamaṅgalavikramādityanandi, whose queen was Maṅgalakesarī. In this case, his name was created out of the name of his mother (*maṅgala*) and his father (*maṅgala* and *vikramādityanandi*) in a way similar to the name of the 4th ruler Surendravikramāditya, which seems to have been formed from his presumed mother’s name Surendramālā and that of his father Vikramādityanandi. If this is correct, Maṅgalavikramādityanandi could have been a brother of the 7th ruler Nandivikramādityanandi. However, other constella-

Inschriften am Karakorum Highway” (Petroglyphs and inscriptions along the KKH).

⁹ According to A. Hilka: Beiträge zur Kenntnis der indischen Namengebung. Die altindischen Personennamen. Indische Forschungen 3. Heft. Breslau 1910. p. 146. A. Hilka follows W. Wassiljew: Der Buddhismus, seine Dogmen, Geschichte und Literatur, übersetzt von A. Schiefner. St. Petersburg 1860, p. 294 (p. 267 of the original Russian edition of 1857), who, in turn, quotes from the late Tibetan author ‘Jam-dbyaṅs-bśad-pa Nag-dbañ-brtson-’grus (1648-1721).

¹⁰ The inscriptions from sites along the Upper Indus marked as “unpublished” here will be published in “Materialien zur Archäologie der Nordgebiete Pakistans.”

¹¹ Die Palola Śāhis, p. 85, 99.

tions are possible¹².

It is not impossible that an unpublished inscription found at Harban contains the name of another queen. The inscription 28:1 reads:

devī śrī vidabhprasu ś(r)ī vuraḍhakvag(u)tāvana

Segmentation and interpretation of this name or of these names are as uncertain as often in the case of names of queens of the Palola Śāhis. A *devī* would be a queen of a lower rank¹³.

A noble lady, it seems, is mentioned in an unpublished inscription from Thor I. Inscription 83:3 reads:

namo buddhāya śrī nāgendramīrabhaṭārikā

Nāgendramīra-bhaṭārikā, who shares her title with queens without, however, being called *devī*, is consequently one of those noble ladies rather mentioned in “Die Palola Śāhis” chapter V.2.3¹⁴.

Furthermore, there is an addition to the Vaiśravaṇa-inscriptions, which are listed as nos. 17a-17f in “Die Palola Śāhis,” p. 44 foll. The unpublished inscription 9:3-4 from the site Chilās V reads:

śrī vaiśravaṇasena rājā.

Finally, the text of the inscription on the pedestal of a bronze of Nārāyaṇa from Kashmir Smast, communicated in “Die Palola Śāhis,” p. 183, note 251, is to be corrected following the reading by H. Falk:

*savacchare trayo-tṛś(e) variṣāyā aṣāḍhamāsa-divase pañcamī [atra di]vase
nārāyaṇapratimā pratitthāvita bhīmāsthāne gharatṭamattṭhe śrī vaīlikāyā devadharmā*
“In the year thirty-three, in the rainy season, on the fifth day of the month Āṣāḍha, at this day, this statue of Nārāyaṇa was installed at the holy place of Bhīmā in the Mill-maṭha by the honourable [lady named] Vaīlikā as a religious gift” (H. Falk)¹⁵.

¹² Die Palola Śāhis, p. 99, 116. —Although the queen of Vajrādityanandi is named Maṅgalaḥamsikā (on the form of the name see ARIRIAB X. 2007, p. 42), the name of the father would suggest rather *Maṅgalādityanandi for their son.

¹³ Die Palola Śāhis, p. 114 foll.

¹⁴ Die Palola Śāhis, p. 131 foll.; on *bhaṭārikā* cf, ibidem, p. 115, 129.

¹⁵ H. Falk: Six Early Brāhmī Inscriptions from Gandhāra. AION 64. 2004 [2007], p. 139-155, particularly p. 144.